



ALBUQUERQUE POLICE DEPARTMENT
GENERAL ORDERS

SOP 1-78 (Formerly 4-6)

Effective: 07/29/2022 Review: 07/29/2023 Replaces: 05/09/2019

1-78 POLICE SERVICE AIDE (PSA) PROGRAM

Related SOP(s), Form(s), Other Resource(s), and Rescinded Special Order(s):

A. Related SOP(s)

[1-66 Missing Persons Unit \(Formerly 5-3\)](#)

[2-46 Response to Traffic Crashes](#)

[2-73 Submission of Evidence, Confiscated Property, and Found Items
\(Formerly 2-08\)](#)

[2-106 Lost and Found Government-Issued Identification Cards and Driver's Licenses](#)

B. Form(s)

Abandoned Vehicle Notification (In TraCS)

Towed Vehicle Notification (In TraCS)

Tow-In Report (In TraCS)

C. Other Resource(s)

None

D. Rescinded Special Order(s)

19-129 New Call Type, Response Regarding Sleeping Individuals

1-78-1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the job duties and responsibilities of an Albuquerque Police Department (Department) Police Service Aide (PSA).

1-78-2 Policy

It is the policy of the Department for a PSA to assist sworn personnel by performing non-hazardous duties within the Department and to provide the community with a variety of community services, including assisting motorists, and responding to traffic crashes and calls for service that pertain to abandoned vehicles.

N/A 1-78-3 Definitions

A. Sleeping Individual

An individual who is either sleeping or otherwise unresponsive due to possible intoxication.

7 1-78-4 Training



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A. A PSA shall:

1. Pass the City of Albuquerque PSA entrance examination and any other required examinations as determined by Background Investigations Unit personnel; and
2. Participate in pre-service training conducted by Academy Division personnel.

7 1-78-5 General Responsibilities

A. A PSA, as their position requires, shall:

1. Handle Department correspondence, including:
 - a. Hand-delivering interoffice correspondence from the Internal Affairs Force Division and the Internal Affairs Professional Standards Division to the area commanders; and
 - b. Picking up interoffice correspondence from the area commands and distributing the correspondence to Department personnel through the Office of the Chief's mail sorting system.
2. When necessary, make copies of Uniform Incident Reports for felony crimes and distributing them to Impact Teams personnel and Investigative Bureau personnel;
3. Distribute citations in the appropriate mail sorting system on the first (1st) floor of the Law Enforcement Center;
 - a. A PSA shall only place the court's original copy and the abstract copy of the citations in the mail sorting system.
4. Deliver license plates to the New Mexico Motor Vehicle Division (MVD);
5. When requested, pick up supplies from the City of Albuquerque Pino Yards warehouse, and the Property Unit;
6. Provide assistance at the area commands, including:
 - a. When needed, a PSA shall:
 - i. Assist community members with Uniform Incident Reports, by answering their questions, and by answering telephone calls; and
 - ii. Ensure that area commands are stocked with supplies.
7. When necessary, transport sworn personnel and Department-issued police vehicles and pool cars to and from the City of Albuquerque Pino Yards;
8. Maintain the Department-issued area command pool cars and ensure they are in good working condition, including, but not limited to, checking the headlights and



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brake lights, verifying the turn signals and emergency equipment work, and verifying the battery is charged; and

- a. If the Department-issued pool car needs to be repaired, the PSA shall notify their immediate supervisor.

9. Perform any other duties as directed by a supervisor.

7 1-78-6 Assisting with Calls for Service

A. Response to Traffic Crashes

1. A PSA shall:

- a. Investigate traffic crashes occurring on public roadways;
 - i. If the PSA identifies elements or contributing factors that appear to be criminal in nature, they shall discontinue their investigation and request for sworn personnel to assist with their investigation and/or to potentially transfer investigative responsibility to an officer.
- b. Investigate crashes on private property consistent with the requirements outlined in SOP Response to Traffic Crashes;
 - i. If the PSA identifies elements or contributing factors that appear to be criminal in nature, they shall discontinue their investigation and request for sworn personnel to assist with their investigation and/or to potentially transfer investigative responsibility to an officer.
- c. Assist sworn personnel at the scene of traffic crashes that involve injuries and fatal crashes by:
 - i. Securing the scene;
 - ii. Directing and controlling traffic;
 - iii. Locating and obtaining witnesses;
 - iv. Transporting passengers or witnesses;
 - v. Taking measurements;
 - vi. Completing tow-in reports;
 - vii. Tagging evidence; and
 - viii. Any other assistance as directed by a supervisor.

N/A

2. If necessary, a PSA may function as the primary responding employee for traffic crashes that involve injuries when:

N/A

- a. Sworn personnel are unable to respond to the crash in a timely manner;
 - i. If no officers are available to respond, an on-duty supervisor may authorize the PSA to be the primary responding employee on the traffic crash.
 - ii. If any person(s) is medically transported, the PSA shall notify the on-duty supervisor of the reason for the medical transport and the category/severity of the injuries.
- b. No injuries are sustained from the traffic crash or the injured person signed a medical waiver with Albuquerque Fire Rescue (AFR); or



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- i. If the person signed a waiver, the PSA shall notify the supervisor and request to change the call type to a traffic crash with no injuries.
 - c. The traffic crash contains elements or contributing factors that appear to be criminal in nature.
 - i. The PSA shall stop the investigation and request for sworn personnel to assist and potentially turn over the investigation.

3. Hit and Run Crashes

N/A

- a. A PSA may be dispatched as primary responding personnel where there is no indication of an individual on-scene or in the area.
- b. When responding to a hit and run crash, a PSA shall take the proper investigative measures to ensure that all information that is known about the individual is collected.
- c. In the event the provided vehicle information matches the registered vehicle description, sworn personnel shall be dispatched to assist with the follow-up investigation, consistent with SOP Response to Traffic Crashes.

B. Response to Traffic Hazards and Assisting Motorists

1. When responding to a traffic hazard, a PSA shall:

- a. Reasonably attempt to provide assistance to motorists in need of mechanical assistance (i.e., provide jumper cables, change flat tires, etc);
 - i. The PSA shall not attempt to push-start a vehicle.
- b. When a tow truck is requested by the motorist, after explaining that the motorist is responsible for all towing charges, request for the on-call wrecker company to respond to the scene;
- c. Provide traffic direction at the scene of a crash or fire, traffic hazards, when intersections where lights are malfunctioning, and for roadway closures;
- d. Transport victims, witnesses, and children to any of the Department and outside law enforcement facilities, receiving homes, shelters, and/or residences as requested;
- e. Assist sworn personnel with the towing of vehicles at traffic stops; and
- f. Conduct a thorough inventory of the vehicle and advise sworn personnel if any of the following is located:
 - i. Weapons;
 - ii. Stolen property;
 - iii. Drugs and/or paraphernalia; and
 - iv. Open containers of alcohol.

N/A

2. When requested by a stranded motorist, a PSA may transport the motorist to the nearest service station for fuel provided that the motorist's vehicle is not obstructing traffic or causing a traffic hazard.
3. A PSA shall only attempt to unlock a vehicle by using an unlocking device (e.g., Slim Jim) to retrieve a child or an animal locked in the vehicle otherwise



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N/A

- a. A PSA shall request a locksmith at the motorist's request.
- b. A PSA may call a third party when extra keys are available.

C. Abandoned Vehicles on Public or City Property

1. Before placing an abandoned vehicle sticker on the vehicle, a PSA shall determine whether the vehicle is abandoned by confirming that:
 - a. The vehicle is parked on or along any street, alley or public way and does not display a current license plate;
 - b. The vehicle was left unattended on or along any street, alley, or public way in the same place for thirty-six (36) hours; or
 - c. The vehicle is violating a parking ordinance.
 - i. The PSA shall issue appropriate citation(s).
2. When the owner cannot be contacted or refuses to move the vehicle, the PSA shall complete an Abandoned Vehicle Notification and place an abandoned vehicle sticker on the vehicle.
 - a. The PSA shall forward completed Abandoned Vehicle Notifications to Central Records personnel.
 - i. Central Records personnel shall mail Abandoned Vehicle Notifications to the registered owner.
 - b. When practical, the PSA who prepared the abandoned vehicle sticker shall be the same as the PSA who has the vehicle towed.
 - c. After seven (7) days from placing the abandoned vehicle sticker, the PSA may have the vehicle towed.
 - i. The PSA shall obtain permission from an on-duty Field Services Bureau (FSB) supervisor before having a vehicle towed.
 - d. When the abandoned vehicle is being towed, the PSA shall complete a Tow-In Report, Towed Vehicle Notification, and a Uniform Incident Report, and shall issue the appropriate citation(s).
 - e. If notice is received from the City Hearing Officer that the registered owner contests the action, the PSA shall not have the vehicle towed until the City Hearing Officer makes a decision about how to proceed.
3. When a vehicle is abandoned on a public roadway and causing a traffic hazard, the PSA shall ensure the vehicle is removed from the roadway after receiving authorization from the FSB supervisor. The PSA shall stand by for a minimum of thirty (30) minutes from the time the call was created to see if the owner returns.
 - a. If the owner returns, the PSA shall assist the motorist with removing the vehicle from the roadway.
 - b. If an owner does not return after the thirty (30) minutes, the PSA shall issue the appropriate citation(s) and have the vehicle towed.

N/A



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4. A PSA shall not tow vehicles that have been abandoned on private property.

a. The PSA is encouraged to make a referral to City of Albuquerque Zoning personnel.

5. Parking Enforcement

a. A PSA shall be responsible for enforcing parking violations on public and private property.

i. On private property, a PSA can only issue citations for handicap parking and fire lane violations.

D. Calls for Service for Property Crimes

1. Response to a Burglary or Stolen Vehicle

N/A

a. A PSA may be dispatched as primary responding personnel to any auto, residential, or commercial burglary call for service, or a stolen vehicle call for service where there is no indication the individual is on-scene or in the area.

i. FSB sworn supervisors and Emergency Communications Center (ECC) Dispatchers shall review calls for service to ensure the safety of PSAs

b. Under no circumstances shall a PSA be dispatched to a burglary that just occurred.

c. If requested by the PSA, sworn personnel shall be dispatched to assist.

d. If a PSA encounters a potentially dangerous scene, they shall move away from the scene and, from a safe distance, notify the ECC to request sworn personnel to respond to the scene.

e. A PSA shall process all burglary and stolen vehicle scenes and collect evidence using standard evidence collection procedures, consistent with SOP Submission of Evidence, Confiscated Property, and Found Items.

2. Calls for Service for Vandalism or Larceny

N/A

a. A PSA may be dispatched as the primary responding personnel for vandalism or larceny calls for service where there is no indication of an individual on-scene or in the area.

N/A

b. A PSA may take initial vandalism and larceny calls for service.

c. The PSA shall determine whether the incident is a felony or a misdemeanor.

i. If the PSA determines that the incident is a misdemeanor, they shall complete a Uniform Incident Report.

1. If any potential leads develop, the PSA shall obtain the individual's information and forward it to their direct supervisor to provide to sworn personnel to conduct a follow-up investigation.

ii. If the incident is determined to be a felony, the PSA shall take the initial call for service, collect any viable individual information or leads, and forward it to their area command's Impact Team for follow-up investigation.



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3. Found Items

- a. A PSA shall pick up found items and complete a Uniform Incident Report.
- b. A PSA shall make a reasonable effort to contact the rightful owner of the recovered property.
 - i. If an owner is not located, the PSA shall tag the property into evidence before the end of their shift, consistent with SOP Lost and Found Government-Issued Identification Cards and Driver's Licenses.

E. Periodic Watches and Welfare Checks

N/A

1. A PSA may:
 - a. Conduct periodic watches on houses and businesses; and
 - b. Conduct welfare checks on elderly people who are confined to a residence, or people who are too sick to care for themselves.

F. Response to Sleeping Individuals

N/A

1. A PSA may be dispatched to a call for service involving a sleeping individual (39-6) where the only reason for the call is the individual sleeping or otherwise down and non-responsive due to intoxication.
2. A PSA shall continue to handle the calls for service in accordance with their training and this SOP.
3. Supervisors and ECC Dispatchers shall review calls for service to ensure that the safety of PSAs and, if requested by the PSA, an officer shall be dispatched to assist.
4. If a PSA should find a suspicious situation, a disorder, or the individual becomes disorderly, they shall move a safe distance from the area, notify the ECC, and request an officer.
5. If the call has the possibility of containing criminal elements/activity, the PSA shall request for an officer to assist and potentially turn over the investigation.
6. Response to calls of individuals who are sleeping or non-responsive along the ABQ Ride Bus routes and the Albuquerque Rapid Transit service areas will generally be dispatched to trained transit security officers, through Albuquerque Fire Rescue's (AFR) communication center.
7. When transit officers are unavailable or a call for service is outside Albuquerque Rapid Transit's service area, a PSA shall be dispatched.
 - a. If no PSAs are available, sworn personnel shall be dispatched.



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G. Calls for Service Not Handled by a PSA

1. A PSA shall not respond to the following types of calls for service unless they have been directed to do so and after the scene has been secured by an FSB supervisor or sworn personnel:
 - a. Audible or silent alarms;
 - b. To assist sworn personnel;
 - c. Police vehicle pursuits;
 - d. Any crime that is in progress where an individual may be present;
 - e. Suspicious/unattended deaths;
 - f. To assist sworn personnel who are involved in a foot pursuit; or
 - g. Welfare checks on emotionally-disturbed persons.
2. A PSA shall not:
 - a. Engage in self-initiated traffic stops or follow traffic violators;
 - b. Be used to arrest or assist with an arrest, including searching any person for any reason;
 - c. Be used to stand by or guard individuals; or
 - d. Actively pursue investigative leads that potentially lead to physical contact with an individual.